

REMARKS

Claims 22 and 26–41 are currently pending in the present application. Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the allowance of claims 26–30 and 34–41.

In the outstanding Action, claims 22 and 31–33 currently stand rejected under 35 USC 103 as obvious in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,591,382 (Nahass, *et al.*). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

In accordance with a telephonic interview between Applicants' representative, Paul Chirgott, and Examiner Boss, Applicants are hereby amending claim 22 to recite that the carbon body is "carbonized" (also referred to in the industry as "baked") after the carbon fibers are dispersed therein. Support for this amendment is found throughout the application. See, for example, page 4, lines 19–31.

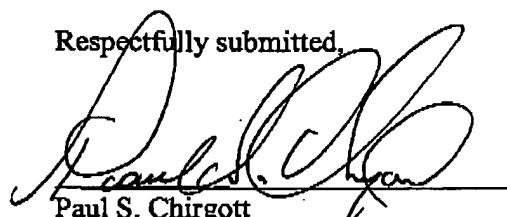
Applicants submit that it is well known to those skilled in the art that the term "carbonization" refers to the thermal transformation of an organic body to carbon through the elimination of heteroatoms, and the conversion of the organic precursor into a carbon polymer. This industry accepted process is explained, in detail, in the *Handbook of Carbon, Graphite, Diamond and Fullerenes*, pp 72–73; and in Kirk-Othmer's *Encyclopedia of Chemical Technology (4th edition)*, pp 953–960. Interestingly, Irwin C. Lewis, Ph.D., one of the co-inventors of the presently claimed invention, authored this particular Kirk-Othmer section. Copies of these references are included with this response, along with Form PTO-1449.

According to Examiner Boss, amending claim 22 in this manner patentably distinguishes it from Nahass, *et al.* Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claim 22 be reconsidered and withdrawn. Furthermore, since claims 31–33 are dependent upon claim 22, Applicants also respectfully request that the rejection of these claims also be reconsidered and withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

For the reasons set forth above, Applicants submit that claims 22 and 31-33 are patentable over the reference cited and applied by the Examiner. Accordingly, a prompt and favorable action is respectfully solicited. If the Examiner has any questions or comments regarding this response, Applicants' undersigned representative would welcome the opportunity to personally address any such concerns.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date: May 12, 2003

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